

Follow the King

THE GOSPEL OF MARK

Sermon Questions

Date: *November 20, 2022* | Scripture: *Mark 8:1-21*

1. Read the passages from the sermon together. If you've heard this passage before, what stood out to you this time? Did you see any new details you missed before?
2. What do you think it would have been like to be a person in the crowd of the four thousand?
3. What do you think it would have been like to be one of the disciples distributing food?
4. What was your initial reaction to Mark 8:14-21?
5. Why do you think Mark includes the brief encounter with the Pharisees here? How does that short conversation add to the passage?
6. At the end of Mark 6, after the feeding of the five thousand, Mark tells us that the disciples' hearts were hardened (Mark 6:52). Jesus takes this opportunity to make the disciples reflect on their own hearts. How are their hearts hard? What are they missing about Jesus?
7. When have you felt convicted to reflect on your own hardness of heart? When have you been called to remember and understand?

Inward Grace in Action (see back also)

It can be easy to focus in on our troubles even when God is with us, providing for us and protecting us. This passage in Mark shows the disciples focusing on their food troubles—they don't know how to feed the crowd and they don't have enough bread to feed themselves on the boat. As we enter in to Thanksgiving, we might be tempted to focus only on our troubles and miss God in the midst of them.

God is gracious even when he allows us to face hardships. As the famous Puritan author Thomas Watson once wrote, "God has one Son without sin—but no son without stripes! Affliction is a badge of adoption." Isaiah prophesied that the coming messiah would be a man of sorrows well acquainted with grief and suffering. As we face suffering, we are invited to know the heart of Christ in a unique way. He says to us in the midst of our pain, "I know that pain, too."

WORSHIP THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

Here are some other ways you can meet with God throughout the week:

Reflect on these Scriptures:

- Deuteronomy 8:1-20
- 1 Kings 8:22-53
- Psalm 136
- Mark 6:30-44
- 1 Corinthians 11:17-26
- Hebrews 8:10-12

Serve: there are lots of opportunities to serve in our church family. [Click Here](#) to serve as a volunteer.

Pray for Cornerstone Schools as we support them through our Thanksgiving Offering this year, that they might complete their bathroom renovations and find vans to meet their needs.

Reach out if you need assistance:

- Call our church office at 703.821.0800
- Request aid from our Deacons' Fund at deaconsfund@mcleanpres.org

Affliction also teaches us to cry out to God in dependence in a way we often forget to in times of joy and comfort. Forgetfulness is a great danger to our faith. Though afflictions are never good in and of themselves, God works in all things for the good of those who love him (Rom 8:28-39). Hardships invite us into a deeper awareness of our need.

Thankfully, God is faithful to deliver us from our hardships. All through the Bible, God calls his people to remember the ways he delivered them from their afflictions—whether that be from the oppression of the Egyptians, wandering in the desert, exile in Babylon, genocide at the hand of the Persians, and many other dire scenarios. Most gloriously, Christ Jesus has delivered us from slavery to sin and the kingdom of the devil. While we face trials in this life, we can take great comfort in knowing God will bring us through to an eternal paradise of safety, love, and fellowship with him.

- What are you thankful for this season?
- What is hard in your life right now? What will make this Thanksgiving hard?
- How might you actively and prayerfully look for the heart of Christ in the midst of those hard things?

Action: Take some time this week to reach out to those whom you know are facing hardships. Pray with them and for them. Additionally, if you are able, reach out to those who may not have Thanksgiving plans and invite them into your home. This is a great opportunity to live out what we say every week—that we are a church *family*!